

Practicing Affirmation

Practicing Affirmation: Chapter Seven

1. What does it mean to affirm someone for imitating Jesus? Read 3rd paragraph on p.134. Can you think of something you've done in the past couple of weeks that Jesus would affirm you for doing, if He were here right now?
2. What does Crabtree say is a Christlike character on p. 135 through the top of p. 136? What is it not?
3. These are some of the Christlike characteristics he mentions: Truthfulness, Obedience, Forgiveness, Alertness, Hospitality, Diligence, Initiative and Dependability. Which stands out as one you could easily affirm in someone? Are there other characteristics that came to mind that he didn't mention?
4. Name an example of a time it was (or could have been) difficult to affirm truthfulness and how affirmation of the person did (or could have) taken the edge off of or eased the situation.
5. Do you find it easy or difficult to praise others for obedience & why?
6. On p. 138 the author says: "Some of the most stubborn and willful rebels can be influenced, even won over, by means of honest affirmation of all who are in positions of authority to simply expect obedience as an entitlement, without thanking the obedient for their cooperation." And then he goes on to say, "It's good, healthy, helpful, and wise to say things like, "Thanks for picking up your things... Your cooperation is appreciated..." etc. etc. Can you think of someone where you have withheld affirmation on the basis of feeling entitled to something?
7. What about forgiveness? When have you seen someone recently (or perhaps not so recently) forgive someone else that you could affirm?
8. I personally, wouldn't naturally think to affirm someone for being alert. But the reality is that we all appreciate it when someone is attentive...vigilant... diligent... watchful... observant. How does this characteristic reflect the nature of God to you personally?
9. When we refer to the God-centered quality of hospitality, we tend to think of entertaining & opening our homes. But I like that he used the small example of a toddler offering Grandpa a lick of his cone. How could you broaden your ability to perceive, receive (and ultimately affirm) others' actions of hospitality?

10. Diligence is the “earnest, focused effort of enabling grace. Though the laborer deserves his wages for laboring, and though he will be compensated by his wages, he will be refreshed by appreciation and affirmation of his diligence” (p. 140). Can you think of a time that you were refreshed by appreciation for your own diligence?

10. It is such a blessing to be around people who take the initiative. Name an example where someone took a very small step of initiative that you appreciated. Share with the group (later with the person).

11. Have you ever felt let down by someone who just wasn't dependable? If so, it can cause you to appreciate all the more someone who is dependable- someone you know you can count on. Who comes to mind when you think of someone demonstrating God's dependability?

12. What does he say about balance at the end of the chapter? Did you find this meaningful in any way?